

Washington, DC - U.S. Reps. Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Rick Larsen (D-WA) this week launched the U.S.-China Working Group, a bipartisan congressional organization working to build diplomatic relations with China and increase congressional engagement on U.S.-China issues.

“It is vital for Congress to increase its dialogue and engage a working relationship with the Chinese. Much of this century’s history will be written between Washington and Beijing,” said Kirk and Larsen, the co-chairs of the new U.S.-China Working Group. “We are starting the U.S.-China Working Group to build diplomatic relations with China and we look forward to working closely with Chinese leaders in the coming months.”

The U.S.-China Working Group already has a growing membership list of nearly 20 Republicans and Democrats. The group will host monthly meetings to hear from key business, academic and political leaders about U.S.-China issues ranging from trade and economic policy to space exploration.

“We want to increase our contact on shared interests and find new opportunities for a successful and strategic relationship,” Larsen said. “While there remain areas of contention and disagreement, it’s better to work together than against each other.”

Kirk and Larsen said the group will go beyond typical Congressional caucuses by establishing business, academic and political advisory boards to gain varied perspectives, and help build consensus in Congress.

“China looms large across myriad issues and we need to reach out to business, academic and political leaders around the United States to hear their ideas and concerns,” Kirk said. “In the coming months, we will mine America’s academic, business and political capital to develop a comprehensive, strategic partnership with China for the 21st century.”

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